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Kivimäki, Timo

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## Can the Pragmatic East Asian Approach to Human Security Offer a Way for the Deepening of the Long Peace of East Asia?

Timo Kivimäki

Department of Political and Economic Studies, University of Helsinki, P.O. Box 54, 00014 Helsinki, Finland;  
E-Mail: [tikivimaki@gmail.com](mailto:tikivimaki@gmail.com); Tel.: +358 503183966

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**Abstract:** East Asia (including Southeast and Northeast Asia) has witnessed the most spectacular pacification in the world during the past 30 years. Certain dimensions related to human security have been perceived as weak points in the long peace of East Asia. Despite progress, authoritarian violence is still a reality in East Asia. At the same time, certain other dimensions of human security—most distinctively those elements related to "freedom from want"—have developed very well during the long peace of East Asia.

This article will study whether the concept of human security constructs realities that are useful for peace in East Asia. For this, the article will look at how the way in which "human" and "security" are linked, serve and deepen the existing social realities of peace in the region. Furthermore, the article will look inside the concepts of "human" and "security" to see how human security is constructed and whether the construction serves to deepen the long peace of East Asia. The article will argue that the East Asian human security debate could be an intellectual adaptation strategy useful for the promotion of the long peace of East Asia in a deeper sense.

**Keywords:** constructivism; East Asia; Human Security; long peace of East Asia; post-structuralism; speech acts

### 1. Context, Aims and Objectives

East Asia (including Southeast and Northeast Asia) has witnessed a spectacular pacification in the world during the past 30 years. If we compare the period from the end of World War II until the end of the 1970s with the period after that, we can see a virtual

disappearance of battle deaths in traditional interstate conflicts (decline of over 99%), a drastic reduction in battle deaths during domestic conflict (almost 40%), and a substantial reduction in number of conflicts. Furthermore, violent repression has decreased and governments have become more constrained in the use of power on their citizens. As a result, one-sided

violence by armed groups or the state against unarmed people is also on the decline. Even violent crime seems to be on the decline [1].

Despite progress, authoritarian violence is still a reality in East Asia. More than two thirds of the population live under regimes that place only slight to moderate limitations on executive authority. This is the main issue where the long peace of East Asia needs deepening. One could also say that peace in East Asia should move from negative to positive peace [2] by establishing institutions that could ensure a lasting peace and the formation of an East Asian security community. This prospect is under investigation in this article. At the same time, certain other dimensions of human security—most distinctively those elements related to "freedom from want"—have developed very well during the long peace of East Asia. Peace in the sense of an absence of wars (negative peace) has been built upon a economic development-oriented conflict management which, as a by-product, had already lifted over 400 million Chinese out of poverty by the end of the second decade of the long peace of East Asia [3]. Despite critics that say that freedom from want is still an unrealistic goal, and that economic development should be sustainable—which it has not always been in East Asia—it is important to acknowledge this side of human security: economic development has been a huge contribution to human welfare in East Asia, even if the region should now aim at making economic development more ecologically sustainable.

The aim of this article is to review the East Asianist human security debate and see if the concept of human security could reconcile some of the weaknesses of the long peace of East Asia. For this the article will look at a) the contents of the two concepts, "human" and "security", b) at what kinds of human security concepts the East Asian concept competes against (and replaces if successful), and c) at the way in which "human" and "security" are linked. While looking at what human security can offer to the long peace of East Asia, this article will not claim or study the causal connection between the concept and the long peace.

By East Asianist debate I mean, first, the authoritative public documents on human security, mainly authored by the Japanese government and the ASEAN secretariat; second, the East Asian debate consisting of writings by Japanese scholars, especially those facilitated by the Tokai University, such as Yusuke Dan, Kazuo Tase, Keizo Takemi, Tatsuro Matsumae, Akira Enoki and Akiko Fukushima; and third, the East Asianist debate having been lead by the great Asian theorists, Amitav Acharya, Surpong Peou, Chung-in Moon, Mely Caballero-Anthony, Mohamed Jawhar bin Hassan, Evelyn Goh, Yu-tai Ts'ai, and many others.

## 2. How Should the Human Security Concept Be Assessed?

Since the critical security study's introduction, the concept of human security has spun off very interesting theoretical discussions on security. But these theoretically interesting debates have not been restricted to the original critical studies or to the newer Copenhagen School approaches. The East Asian debate has also been theoretically innovative and interesting. However, the East Asian debate has not been very explicit or reflective about the use of theoretical concepts. The debate has not gone back to the foundations that could legitimize a concept. This is why I think it could be interesting to make an interpretation of the explicit foundations that could justify the East Asian usage of the concept of human security.

If we look at what was defined as the East Asian debate on human security at the beginning of this paper, one can see a clear commitment to a pragmatic, empiricist effort to relate concepts to something real and concrete in East Asia. According to Peou [4]: "If human security is to stay analytically useful as a concept that can be operationalized and relevant in policy terms, we need to prioritize policy commitment, motivate policy action, and assess policy outcomes." Thus Peou sees the truth of human security as crucially dependent on the pragmatic consequences of it as an adaptation strategy to reality, or even as a conceptual construct of social reality. Furthermore, Peou [4] also assesses the concept of human security from the point of view of whether or not it can be "sold" to the policy community: "My hope is that the concept ... can be better accepted and applied if we succeed in building a concept that is neither too elastic nor too restrictive, combining theoretical insights into one that is neither too parochial nor too eclectic." While it would be possible to say that the concept has already been adopted by the policy community—in 2014 the concept turned 20 years old and it has been adopted and used in agencies of the UN, EU and other political organizations—the practice of human security is always dependent on how much it has been socialized in societies and how high priority it gets in policy-making [5].

In addition, the merits of considering something as a security issue area are thought of in the East Asianist debate as a matter of practicality. The original ideas of the securitization theory [6] have been criticized in the East Asian debate for their lack of empirical focus, for the disinterest in real policy consequences and the unintended effects of securitization [7–9].

All this sounds much like the teachings of the pragmatists [10,11] who rejected concepts and theo-

ries as explanations of reality, and truths as mirror images of reality. Instead, they saw knowledge as a pragmatic strategy of adaptation to and manipulation of the surrounding world [12,13]. If we take the idea that knowledge is a building block of the social reality we live in (as constructivist say) seriously, pragmatic attitude to this truth makes the articulation of interpretations strategic activity. As Chalk said, pragmatic research should therefore study knowledge production, such as the introduction of the concept of human security, as strategic symbolic creation of social realities in interaction between articulators of interpretations and their audiences. Symbolic interactionism [14] that studies this interaction does not just analyse which constructs, created by symbolic interaction, exist; it is also interested in studying the actual "symboling", the manipulation of symbols by active persons, defining and redefining their social realities [15]. Thus the articulation of "human security" can be judged as a rhetorical strategy on the basis of how it advises us to adjust to the social and material realities that surround us and to change conflict-prone structures and processes. In this article the criterion is how successful it is in creating realities that help the long peace of East Asia. From the point of view of an intellectual, the question is also whether it is realistic to expect that the concept will be accepted among the policy community.

According to Chaim Perelman, Olbrechts-Tyteca [16] and the theorists of the new rhetoric [17], political argumentation is based on the effort to associate the policies one tries to promote with some policies about which one's audience already feels generally positive, and to dissociate one's projects from those of which one's audience disapproves. Enos puts it thus: "To create one's rhetorical structure of reality ... is to make use of a structure to establish a solidarity between accepted judgments and others which one wishes to promote [18]." This is what the proponents of human security are doing by concretely linking "human" and "security" in one concept. They are creating a rhetorical association between human well-being (survival in tolerable conditions in absence of want and fear [19,20]), and security, often the dominant security concept; that of national security. This is done in order to associate human well-being (something that one wants to promote) with national security, which, in our pre-agreements of argumentation (something that the audience already accepts as truth or as a norm), is undeniably regarded as something crucially valuable. Thus, the priority on the survival of national sovereignty is also claimed as vital to human survival/well-being.

How the association between human welfare and security is made is crucial for the pragmatic value of the reality of "human rights" (association): does the introduction of human welfare into the security realm affect the way in which traditional security is constructed or does it just change the way in which hu-

man welfare is seen. Since human security concept is a discursive/argumentative strategy, what kind of conceptualization East Asian human security is intended to replace needs to be studied strategically. Furthermore, the type of human values included in the issue area to be securitized is important. What is inside the concept of human security (human rights or economic development, for example) is also highly relevant, as is the political context in which the East Asian concept of human security is articulated. Thus I will now move on to the examination of the pragmatic value for the long peace of East Asia by investigating the implications of the content of "human" and "security," the role of the East Asian concept as a substitute of the European idea of human security, and the implications of the way in which the two concepts are linked.

### 3. The Content of East Asian Concept of Human and Security

While the idea of human security can be traced far back into the history of Western thought [21] the actual term was launched into political terminology by an Asian intellectual, Mahbub ul Haq, in the UNDP's Human Development Report of 1994. The concept was first introduced in an extensive, development-emphasizing form that now is seen as "the Asian version" of the concept. The concept presents five new commonly accepted elements to security thinking.

First, all human security thinking is based on the concerns of human beings; either as individuals or as a humanity. As the Japanese government puts it, any policy guided by a concern for human security "puts people at the center of concerns" (the "human" part) and "emphasizes benefiting people who are exposed to threats" (the "security" part) [22,23]. Putting value on human survival and well-being is the first normative basic premise of the concept of human security. The types of human values seen as belonging to the scope of security are debated. While survival is accepted by all proponents of human security, the East Asian debate often also defines a wide variety of values related to human well-being and freedom as security concerns [24,25]. Instead of going into the debate on whether the concept loses its normative relevance if it distances itself too much from its survivalist core, I will simply focus on those definitions that do indeed stay close to this core.

Second, threats to and the aim for human security are not only national, as is the case with national security, but transnational [26]. The assumption that the sender and the target of threats can be not only national, but also transnational or sub-national, is the first common ontological premise of all human security thinking. The transnational nature of human security means, on the one hand, that the source of a threat is not always an intentional, national agent. While national security challenges are posed by

intentional actors—mostly nation-states, but sometimes also alliances of several nations—human security challenges can be posed by non-actors, such as climate change or viruses. These kinds of threats exist in absence of "enemies." In some cases, human security threats are posed by actors that the international community refuses to consider legitimate, such as criminals and terrorists. This is problematic for security theory, which often creates models that assume bargaining between the sender and the target of a security threat. Security actors never negotiate with viruses or the ozone layer, and rarely with criminals or terrorists.

Furthermore, the transnational nature of human security means that while national security in its classical form means the absence of a threat to one nation from another (and is therefore inter-national), human security challenges such as environmental degradation, hunger or authoritarian violence can be local ones (such as flooding in a river delta), national ones (such as human rights violations), transnational ones (such as drought in a region covering parts of several states), or global ones (such as climate change).

Third, human security thinking also assumes that threats may be of a different sort from those previously seen. While traditional security thinking has focused on military threats, human security thinking complements this thought by pointing out non-military, soft threats, such as the problems of nation-building, famine, antagonistic feelings between ethnic entities, etc. Chung-in Moon and Edward Azar gave form to theories based on this difference, linking it to the realities of the third world. They criticize the traditional military view for its overexposure to the realities of the developed world [27]. According to Azar and Moon, the "software" side of the security problematic in the Third World is more important "as opposed to the traditional Western analyses of security, which tend to concentrate on the 'hardware' side of the problem." This broad view of the soft versus hard nature of threats is the second common ontological premise on which human security thinking rests.

Fourth, some theorists also say that the logic of human security is fundamentally different from that of national security. In the latter, self-help is the main mode of action, while the former is concerned with helping others "other-help", [4]. The need to go beyond the partisan principles of self-help is the first common praxiological premise of the human security concept. A focus on the well-being of the weakest individuals in national development cooperation policies would make it difficult to reduce human security operations to the traditional logic of self-help. Alternatively, if one thinks of the referent object of human security as all of humankind, one could conceive of human security as humanity's self-help.

Finally, while traditional security threats can be seen as being tackled by military response (however,

many traditional security threats nowadays are tackled by what is now being called civilian crisis management), the remedy for human security threats might not be military, but can, as the Human Development Report of 1994 suggests, be development. The broader approach to tackling security threats is the second common strategic principle of human security. The inter-departmental, multi-agency nature of responses to human security challenges has played a central role in putting human security into effect in the Japanese government's evaluation of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security. According to the evaluation's definition, the Trust Fund "promotes mainstreaming the human security concept in UN agencies, and it stimulates multi-sector and multi-agency activities of the UN agencies based on issues beyond the mandate of each agency. This leads to mainstreaming the concept of human security not only in the UN agencies, but also in the member countries and civil society." [28,29].

However, in addition to concepts in common, the interpretation of human security has many differences. Many of these differences cut across the divide between the "West" and East Asia. For some (mostly Western) theorists, the focus on human beings replaces the focus on national security while for others (mostly East Asian scholars), national security is instrumental to human security. The role of the state as a threat to or an instrument of human security is a fundamental alternative ontological premise of human security.

Many Western approaches to the enlargement of the security concept—such as critical security studies and human security—are contrasted with the narrow national security view. Booth, , Krause, Williams and Betts & Eagleton-Pierce [30], for example, frame human security more in alternative than complementary terms, emphasizing how often states kill their own people instead of defending themselves [30–33]. Rudolph Rummel shows conclusive data for this by pointing to the fact that governments kill more than six times as many of their own citizens as do intra-state and interstate wars put together [34]. According to Andrew Mack "the realist paradigm is incapable of dealing with the threat states pose to their own citizens. This is the primary reason why proponents of human security argue that the individual should be the referent object of security." [35].

On the level of policy debate, Canada represents the extreme end of the spectrum at which the human security concept is mainly reserved for intrusive interventions for the sake of the well-being of individuals against states that cannot or will not secure them. According to a Senior Policy Advisor in the Peacebuilding and Human Security Division of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade [36], the two main proofs of the effects on policy of the concept of human security are the banning of landmines and the establishment of the International

Criminal Court, both acts that went against states' sovereignty.

In the East Asian debate on human security, the instrumentalist concept is the mainstream one. According to this view, states are instruments (but not the only ones) of human security and thus national security is also important for human security [4,37,38]. Barry Buzan echoes East Asian logic by criticizing the reductionist notion of human security [39].

This is why in the East Asian debate human security is seen as threatened especially in the context of state collapse [37,38]. The Japanese sponsored UN Council for Human Security reveals its pro-state orientation by placing a special focus on people on the move, that is, people who cannot attain security via the protection of their own states. With the concept of human security, national security also receives new justifications: "when we focus on the security of the human persons, of the individuals, we're making sure that state security and state sovereignty are effectively implemented to help, to protect, to promote the welfare, the well-being and the dignity security of their own people ..." [40].

A derivative of the debate on the relationship between national and human security is the question of the relationship between sovereignty and the principle of non-interference on the one hand, and human security on the other. If states, especially authoritarian ones, present threats to human security, most Western approaches claim that sovereignty should not be allowed to restrict activity (especially by democracies) to guarantee human security. However, if states are a crucial instrument of human security as is often believed in East Asia, sovereignty should not be compromised. These two views are the first main alternative strategic premises of human security. The fact that an intrusive Western interpretation was perhaps more prominent originally meant that the concept of human security got a slow start in East Asia. Despite the activity of the Japanese (and Korean and Philippine) government and the former Thai foreign minister and former ASEAN Secretary General, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, accepting the concept of human security, it has not been easy for East Asian intellectuals, let alone for governments [40]. According to Paul Evans, "East Asia is resistant to concepts of security that, in normative terms, have the potential to erode traditional concepts of sovereignty" [41]. The human security concept that East Asia sympathizes with the most is one where sovereignty cannot be compromised, as it is an instrument of national security and thus an important element in human security: "the human security concept is a rather comprehensive concept, but it will not be in competition with the issue of state sovereignty. In fact, it is making the state sovereignty more meaningful" [40]. This deviation from the Western discourse is understandable taken the differences in historical experiences of East Asia and the West.

While the last big war in Europe was diagnosed as a result of extreme nationalism and thus security was associated with lowering state borders, in East Asia, the two biggest wars (Vietnam and Korea) were experiences where intervention and interference magnified the impact on humans of the war. In these differing historical contexts it is understandable that the Western concept of peace and human security prescribes the lowering of borders, while the East Asian prescription is to the opposite [42]. If we go further back in history, we also encounter the impact of colonialism on the East Asian interest in the protection of sovereignty. The hesitance of East Asian countries to accept Western concepts that could legitimize Western interference in the domestic affairs of East Asian nations is understandable against this historical background. To some extent also Japan has in some countries been perceived as a "semi-colonial" power due to the history of colonialism and expansionism during the Second World War, and as such Japan has not been a perfect advocate for the concept of human security.

While the disagreement on the role of the state as an instrument of or as a threat to human security is most distinct in political security issues, such as the question of human rights, it is a relevant divide also in questions related to economic human security. However the divide between supporters and opponents of income-distribution-sensitive development strategies does not cut across the divide between the West and East Asia. East Asian capitalist as well as socialist discourse often criticizes Western approaches that are not interested in the economic security of the state or individual poor people, but instead, are driven by individual greed. A good example of the capitalist critique can be found in the recent discourse on moderation in world affairs by Malaysia's prime minister Najib Razak [43,44]. This discourse does not emphasize only economic human security of individuals, but that of the nation. Lee Jones interprets this emphasis, not only in Malaysia, but in the entire Southeast Asia, as an emphasis of the interests of the class of capital owners. The emphasis on the interests of the "national economy", rather than economic human security of the poor, simply shows the class foundation of the Southeast Asian states [45]. Radical [46] and developmental [47] socialist critique of the Western economic policies, again, criticizes both the class-based capitalist economic prioritization as well as the neglect of the economic human security of the poor in the West. While in the former the subject of economic human security was the class of the proletariat, in the latter, despite of the original rhetoric (by Deng, for example), not the worker, but the entire national economy. In reality, however, the collectivist approach to economic human security has made it easy for the East Asian states occasionally also to neglect their poor.

Another important divide between East Asian and Western concepts of human security is the greater focus of East Asian (and, actually, Northern European) concepts on economic security. The view that human security can mainly be preserved through political and developmental means is the second main alternative strategic premise of human security. While the Western human security concept has often been focused on political freedoms [21,36], the Asian concept is more closely tied to development. The Unit for Human Security at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs takes a middle road including both political and developmental means in the menu of strategic choices for human security. "Human security threats cannot be tackled through conventional mechanisms alone. Instead, they require a new consensus that acknowledges the linkages and the interdependencies between development, human rights and national security" (emphasis added).

The link between development and security in the East Asian debate is sometimes seen as a causal association from development to security [19]: that is to say, without development it is not possible to achieve security. This is very much the view that is repeated in the inaugural documents of ASEAN [48]. Sometimes the association is seen to go in the other direction. President Benigno S. Aquino III sum-

marized this view in the 13th ASEAN Summit as follows: "The Philippines views regional security as a valuable element in the evolving Asian architecture. The preservation of peace and stability in our region is an imperative if we are to continue to prosper and develop." [49]. Finally, the concepts of human security and comprehensive security have conceptually bound security and development together as one complex approach. According to the blueprint of the ASEAN Political-Security Community: "The APSC subscribes to a comprehensive approach to security, which acknowledges the interwoven relationships of political, economic, social-cultural and environmental dimensions of development." [50]. This conception is increasingly common in East Asian rationalization of peace; peace is needed for investments, which again are needed for prosperity. It is not possible to speak of positive peace in the absence of development.

In short, the main positions of the Western and East Asian human security debates are summarized as follows (Table 1).

Differences in definitions of human security persist. The two main differing points at which the East Asian debate needs to defend its position are related to the way in which national and human security relate to each other, and to the role of economic well-being in the content of human security.

**Table 1.** Common and Differing Positions on Human Security.

	Western debate	East Asian debate
Normative premise	The concept of national security is insufficient, as the security of human beings is valuable as such, too.	The concept of national security is insufficient, as the security of human beings is valuable as such, too.
Nature of threat	Senders and targets of security threats are not only national, but also sub-national, transnational and global.	Senders and targets of security threats are not only national, but also sub-national, transnational and global.
Nature of threat	In addition to military threats, soft non-military threats, such as famine or lacking governance can threaten individuals.	In addition to military threats, soft non-military threats, such as famine or lacking governance can threaten individuals.
Nature of threat	States are often threats to, rather than instruments of, human security.	Generally, nations are an instrument of human security. Thus national security is an instrument of human security.
Approach to security	The narrow concept of self-help has to be broadened when dealing with threats to human security.	The narrow concept of self-help has to be broadened when dealing with threats to human security.
Approach to security	Military means are insufficient in the promotion of human security.	Military means are insufficient in the promotion of human security.
Approach to security	Human security needs to be tackled mainly as a political issue.	Human security should be tackled mainly as a developmental issue.



#### 4. The Battle between Alternative Contents of Human Security

The main debate in terms of the definition of human security between East Asia and the West is related to the balance between political and economic values as issue areas to be securitized. While the UNDP defines human security as freedom from fear and freedom from want, the East Asian consensus can only be found relating to the latter [37]. To some degree, the Asian association of human security with development is historically determined. The first time an East Asian government endorsed the concept was right after the Asian economic crisis. At that time, Foreign Minister (later Prime Minister) Keizo Obushi emphasized compassion in the aftermath of an economic crisis and called it an important element in the development of "human safety". Later, his terminology changed and he integrated his thinking with the human security terminology of the UNDP [51].

However, the most prominent explanation for the economy-based definition of human security is related to the overall "developmentalist" security thinking in the East Asian security debate [52]. "National security is often perceived to include the security and welfare of the state and the people" [53]. Development in general has been seen as central to the prevention of conflicts since the time of President Magsaysay in the Philippines, and as the theoretical basis of developmental security thinking within the spheres of traditional security in Indonesia's President Suharto's concepts of national resilience, Deng Xiaoping's concept of security through the four modernizations, Korea's Prime Minister Lee's administration *Global Korea Vision* and Japan's Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira's doctrine on *Comprehensive Security* [54]. If traditional national security has already been associated with development, then it is no miracle that the same is true of human security.

In general, a developmentalist orientation to human security is in line with the overall East Asian orientation to security and the purpose of states. I have shown this by first defining criteria for a developmentalist orientation and ranking East Asian regimes according to these criteria into three categories. Then I looked at how a developmentalist orientation has been associated with success in conflict prevention (through examining conflict fatalities). According to my findings it seems that the discourse on development is significantly associated with peace [52]. Rather than claiming a causal association between exogenous variables, this shows that peacefulness and a developmental orientation are part of one approach or discourse which values peace and sees the promotion of economic development as an important task and identifying quality of states.

In some East Asian countries, the foundation for a regime's legitimacy has consisted of development, rather than democratic credentials. In this setting,

one might think that an emphasis on "freedom from want" as a matter of security would downgrade the priority of democracy. For example, demonstrations are sometimes suppressed in China, Singapore, Vietnam, and previously in Suharto's Indonesia; seen as something harmful to foreign investments and thus economic development—and security. In this way, economic human security could serve repression in the name of overall security. However, if one looks at associations between democracy, developmentalism and peace, it seems that developmentalism is no longer part of a discursive package that is seen as an alternative to the discourse of democracy. On the contrary, a regression analysis of democracy (as per measures from the Polity IV data), developmentalism, and conflict fatalities show that developmentalism, rather than being an alternative foundation for a regime's legitimacy, has recently become part of a "modern package" in which democracy and developmentalism are positively associated [52,55]. The role of the state has become the promotion of modernity along with economic development and democracy. The discourse on modernity has thus linked freedom from want with democracy, instead of seeing developmental needs as security issues that can be used against democracy as justifications of authoritarian violence. This is especially clear in the debate on human security, while the debate on "non-traditional security" as an alternative to human security often tends to see the realization of development goals, rather than individualistic democratic principles, as legitimizing for East Asian states [56]. Thus, economic human security serves the political purpose of promoting the long peace of East Asia without seriously increasing the risk of authoritarian violence, even though "non-traditional security" has a more dubious relationship with democracy.

While democracy and developmentalist human security concepts are associated today, the total lack of a priority on development/security tends to be the case in countries that are the least democratic and that have the most authoritarian violence. Of all East Asian countries, only in North Korea and in Burma/Myanmar is the priority on security clearly separated from developmental priorities. In these countries, national security interests can thus justify policies that are suicidal from the point of view of development. The lifting of the priority on human economic survival to a par with national security priorities could therefore greatly reduce human suffering, but whether it would increase East Asian peace, is, of course, a matter of definition. A true example from Burma's Chin State illustrates the potential effects.

During the time of famine in the Chin State of Burma/Myanmar in 2007–2008, villages with stockpiles of rice could not effectively offer their surplus rice to villages in areas where rice had been destroyed by rats, due to troop movements in the area which had forced villagers to help with transportation of



ammunition. Furthermore, due to the risk of externally instigated subversion and espionage, foreign organizations could not be allowed to move freely in the area to help the starving people [57]. If Burma/Myanmar's government had framed famine as a human security threat—if it had securitized human well-being—the argument that the overriding threat to national security was a justification for inaction in the face of famine could not have been presented. If famine was also a security matter, the Burmese army could not have been insensitive to the human costs of securing the border by means of ammunition deliveries to prevent foreign intrusion into its territory. While promoting the political side of human security could be useful for East Asia, it is the promotion of the economic side that is more likely to bear fruit there. Governments that have a poor human rights record can be brutal to their challengers, while governments where national security enables economically suicidal policies are murderous to all citizens.

The emphasis on freedom from want in the East Asian concept of human security and comprehensive security also has political power implications. On the one hand, the centrality of development has given rise to economic technocrats, who are no longer considered to be ordinary members of the bureaucracy, but instead to be experts central to security. At least in Indonesia, the role of the "Berkeley Mafia" became central under Suharto's rule and something similar could be seen from the 1960s in Thailand. Economic technocrats have also become central in the Chinese administration after Deng Xiaoping's consolidation of power. Furthermore, due to the centrality of development for security, the Indonesian military had to assume a central role in the economy: if economy was central to stability and only the army could be trusted, the army had to be a strong control over the economy, too. The dual (military and economic) roles of the militaries and the centrality of military officials in big companies in authoritarian regimes in East Asia have often been unintended consequences of the securitization of development. In the long run, it has meant that, especially in Indonesia, the military has received only a small fraction of its income from the public sector, while the majority of its funding has come from military businesses. This meant that until the collapse of 1998, the economy had to be highly regulated by licenses and permits so that the military-controlled public sector could exercise control over economic development. Only in this way could the military force its share out of companies and keep it meaningful for bigger companies to keep military men on their boards in order to ensure that the licenses necessary for business would be forthcoming [58,59]. While this has not helped economic development, it has made it impossible for the Indonesian bureaucracy and politicians to make economically suicidal decisions; development and the economic interests of the military always had to be a factor in all policies.

The lack of political substance in the East Asian human security concept relates to the authoritarian history of East Asian states. It would be difficult for countries that use repression of citizens' political rights as a political power strategy to accept a security concept that could bring political rights on a par with urgent national security priorities. Yet one could claim that in an area where the world's most genocidal regimes in absolute (Cultural Revolution China, and China during the Great Leap Forward) and relative (fatalities/population) terms (Pol Pot's Cambodia) can be found [34], one could assume that raising the priority on the political rights of citizens could prove a significant contribution to the long peace of East Asia.

If one looks at the political debate on human security [60], it seems clear that the Japanese offensive in the promotion of human security did not only intend and manage to promote economic human security thinking in East Asia, but that it also contributed to the pre-emption of the much more radical Canadian concept of human-rights-focused human security. In this sense, the contribution of East Asian human securitization could be framed against other possibilities. A realist might perhaps say that the Japanese initiative was more realistic as there could never be political support among East Asian authoritarian regimes for a politically oriented human security concept. Successful securitization of a politically loaded human security concept would perhaps have been unrealistic. Yet, if such a concept were more fruitful from the point of view of pragmatism, there would be no excuse for governments to challenge it.

## **5. How are "Human" and "Security" Linked in the East Asian Debate?**

The association between human well-being and national security can be made in several ways. The new issue area that is being introduced into the security realm can be seen as the authentic origin of all securities. Alternatively, it can be seen as something equal to national security. Finally, it can also be introduced as something that is important, but instrumentally subordinate to, national security.

In critical security studies of Booth [32], Smith [31] and Betts & Eagleton-Pierce [30] the state is implicitly seen as valuable only through its effect on the security of its citizens. In these writings human security is used as the yardstick, and since many states are seen as poor instruments of human well-being, national security is not a valuable concept, and human security is presented as an alternative.

However, this is not the way that human and national security concepts are linked in the East Asian debate. Peou [4] expresses his East Asian view perhaps most clearly by saying that human security gives national security a new dimension: national security is also important for the safety of citizens. This means that only a certain dimension of national

security can be reduced to human priorities. In this way of thinking, national security and human welfare are linked, but in a way that allows some independence for both. There can be national security that is neutral to human security, and there can be human security separate from national security.

Furthermore, human security, especially its economic dimension, can be instrumental to national security. After the East Asian states assumed a state-identity that emphasized the role of the state in the promotion of prosperity and development, national security apparatuses of East Asia started promoting the idea of pro-poor economic policies as a way to secure regime legitimacy and fight violence challenges to the state. This was already the strategy of the Philippine military under president Ramon Magsaysay in the 1950s [61,62], while it became a strategy more widely accepted within the ASEAN after the establishment of the organization [63–65]. Development became a way to pacify the people in China after the ending of the cultural revolution: as in ASEAN, economic grievances were tackled head-on, instead of using military means as the first option. The obsession to develop, rather than tackling political grievances is obvious in the Chinese documents of their policies in the restless provinces of Tibet and Xinjiang [66,67].

In the East Asian human security debate the value of national security is partly independent from the value of the nation, and since the nation is a vital instrument of human security, one cannot readily justify compromising national security in the name of human security. This way of linking "human" and "security" in East Asia has avoided making the concept a justification for rebellions or for intrusive humanitarian intervention. The strong Japanese role in the articulation of the concept of human security must have been partly motivated by this East Asian desire to divert the concept from its radical roots [60]. According to the progressive input of the Commission for a New Asia, a group of 16 respected Asian intellectuals, humanitarian concerns can justify intervention, but only as a last resort, for purely humanitarian purposes, under a UN mandate, with the acceptance of the population of the country, and only if there is an extreme threat to human security and legality [53]. The fact that intervention can be possible only in extreme cases of threat to human security and legality is justified by the fact that national security and sovereignty are values in themselves.

Another way of avoiding reductionism is to see national security as a vital instrument of human security, although in certain countries and certain historical periods the nation might seem a poor instrument of human security. An international normative construction in which strong nations are not allowed to interfere in the domestic affairs of smaller nations could be valuable for human security, since it is a convention that generally yields value for human survival.

The latter interpretation is often present in the East Asian human security debate. According to the former Japanese prime minister: "both threats to a sovereign nation and the international system also clearly threaten humanity and therefore the individual" [25]. The overall East Asian diagnosis of the relationship between national and human securities is more positive to the state, and this is understandable, taken the historical context of East Asia. East Asia's last great conflicts before the peaceful period after 1979 multiplied due to the lack of respect for sovereignty and the principle of non-interference. In terms of human lives lost, two of these conflicts—the Korean War and the Vietnam War—were the world's most serious conflicts after World War II. In Southeast Asia, President Sukarno's radical thinking in the 1960s about the new emerging forces (communists and third world nationalists) opposed by the old established forces (imperialists and neo-colonialists) also constructed a world with little respect for national sovereignty. Sukarno's disrespect for the sovereignty of neighboring countries also caused insecurity for Malaysians and Singaporeans. These mistakes were formative for the East Asian emphasis on peaceful respect for sovereignty, as were the experiences of ultra-nationalist authoritarianism for European integration-based peace. In addition to inter-state conflict, an insufficient level of nation-building has also caused intra-state wars, and thus many Asian intellectuals feel that Asia needs a strict primacy of national security. According to ([53] p. 53) "Security is still seen very much in terms of national security ... (this is) felt keenly in Asia because nation-building is still in progress and national consciousness is high in most if not all countries." Thus it is understandable that the principle that human security does not in normal circumstances justify intervention supports the normative and interpretative construct on which the long peace of East Asia after 1979 and ASEAN peace have been based.

On the level of rhetoric, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation [48] could be considered the founding document of both peace periods. Three out of the six main principles of this document emphasize non-interference and respect for sovereignty as common rules of interaction between signatory nations. According to the Uppsala conflict data, Southeast Asian countries had supported each other's insurrections militarily 29 times before they joined ASEAN, while during the peaceful period after joining ASEAN, this has not happened once. Clearly, a concept of security that gives little excuse for threats to national security rules the long peace of ASEAN. The same is true for East Asia. During the Cultural Revolution and proletarian internationalism in China (and in Pol Pot's Cambodia), respect for sovereignty was not part of the normative construct, and thus, states extensively supported each other's insurrections—they were sometimes seen as necessary for human welfare,

liberation and justice. The area witnessed 35 cases of intervention in support of insurgents that fellow Asians felt represented a better concept of justice and security. However, once the long peace of East Asia started in 1979, all this stopped. Non-interference therefore seems to belong to the successful East Asian peace strategy. Even though one could say that non-interference also offers political elites an opportunity to repress their populations in impunity, it is also the case that in the peaceful period when East Asian states respected national security objectives by avoiding military intervention into each other's internal disputes, pacification has also led to a decline in authoritarian violence [68]. Thus, non-interference has not increased the authoritarian threat to human security.

Then, if military non-interference has clearly been part of the successful normative construction of the long peace of ASEAN and the long peace of East Asia since 1979, it might be tempting to say that the association between security and human survival, well-being and freedom should have such a relationship to the concept of national security, that there could be no justification for military interference in domestic governance. Of course, non-interference is not a necessary objective condition for peace, and the current normative, identity-based and interpretational constellation behind the relative peace in East Asia is not unchanging, nor is it the only possible construction that can succeed in preserving peace. The long peace of East Asia is not perfect. But still, it seems that East Asian history has taught us some lessons about the value of sovereignty for human security. These lessons have given rise to local ownership of the norms of non-interference. Thus, one should probably not insist on interpretations of the relationship between national and human security which give easy justification for inter-state military intervention. An articulation of the values of human security and national security as independent entities and the assessment of the value of national security for human security, both typical to the East Asian human security debate, can therefore lead to a useful increase in East Asian relative peace.

While the consequences of East Asian relationship between "human" and "security" can be assessed from the point of view of peace and war, it is also possible to assess it from the point of view of power politics. If human security does not facilitate legitimate humanitarian intervention, it means that citizens cannot expect military assistance from outside the country against their rulers. The East Asian concept of human security has been criticized for elitism: an Asia-specific cultural context has been used to legitimize the sanctity of even brutal elites against international power. Protected by cultural diversity and the natural acceptance of a nation-based international system, authoritarian power interests legitimize oppression against their citizens [45]. At the same time, taken

that the international system is no more democratic than that of the authoritarian countries, more intrusive human security concepts may lend support to international authoritarianism, as was experienced during the "colonial protection of East Asian subjects" or during the international occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. This is why most East Asianist voices against the intrusive human security concept see such concepts "as part of a 'West against the Rest' effort to impose individualistic and culturally inappropriate Western notions of human rights and humanitarian intervention on the developing world" [35].

Even if the East Asian concept of human security does not dominate national security, neither does it constitute a reality within which national security can dominate human security. The economic survival of citizens was already a security matter at the time when several East Asian countries were seeking "comprehensive security". In these regimes (Thailand since Prime Minister General Prem Tinsulanonda, post-WWII Japan, South Korea since the 1970s, Suharto's Indonesia, Magsaysay's Philippines and the Philippines after 1986, and Deng Xiaoping's China) where development was seen as a security issue, economic suicides (like President Sukarno's trade embargo against Singapore in 1965, the Burmese military's decision to abolish the value of some legal tenders, and Pol Pot's decision to demonetize the Cambodian economy) could not have been committed in the name of national security. Later regimes that subscribe to the principles of human security have had difficulties in using national security as an argument for political repression. Thus, even a weak concept of human security (one that does not dominate national security) can create a reality where the survival of citizens takes on a greater priority. Internal security acts and authoritarian control in the name of national security mostly take place in countries where human security does not belong to the political vocabulary. Yet even in those countries where human security has some value, the treatment of conflict areas often lacks sensitivity to human security, and especially to the political freedom aspects of it.

## 6. Conclusions

East Asian human security does not justify rebellion or uninvited humanitarian interventions, due to the fact that human security does not take priority over national security. The normative orientation that the East Asian human security concept constitutes in relation to humanitarian intervention seems useful for the long peace of East Asia.

East Asian human security has a developmentalist core: it is the developmental concerns of human survival that get the priority in terms of security issues. This can present two problems. On the one hand, if military security and development are the core functions of states, these priorities can easily justify

compromises in competition with democracy. Economic efficiency could be seen as a reason for not opening the political system up for greater participation. However, development in East Asia is increasingly seen as a twin value to democracy within the context of modernization [55]. The modern missions of states include both the provision of development and an interest in democratic governance. Thus, the economic content of human security is likely to further the long peace of East Asia, and also in the sense that it reduces authoritarian violence. Still, a greater political content for the concept could be useful in light of the historical challenges that authoritarian violence has posed to East Asian human security.

On the other hand, the emphasis on the concept "economic" in East Asian developmentalism still poses a challenge to human security, unless economic priorities cannot be considered on the long term and reconciled with the priorities of the environment. Focusing on environmental human security could offer a great new potential for East Asian human security debate. Such a focus would not stir the sensitivities related to the norm of non-interference in East Asia, and yet a focus on environmental security could be a significant contribution to positive regional cooperation for human well-being.

In conclusion, therefore, the East Asian debate on human security could create realities that strengthen regional peace and well-being. Thus, if a concept promotes progressive political realities, scholars ought to endorse it regardless of the analytical implications.

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Most of the complaints about the analytical value of human security are related to the search for a mirror image of reality. Yet, even as such, the problems of the concept have been exaggerated. Andrew Mack, for example, claims that if one wishes to examine the interconnections between war, poverty and governance, then these variables should be defined in an analytically independent manner [35]. However, the concept of human security does not prevent categories that cut across or disaggregate the concept of human security. Conceptual categories that reveal similarities in one dimension do not imply similarity in all dimensions. If the concept of human security lumps issues with different causal dynamics together, then we will have to create concepts underneath the conceptual umbrella of security that make it possible to develop models that differentiate, for example, between security threats generated by an intentional enemy (such as a neighboring country or an ethnic group), and threats that arise from non-intentional sources (such as the environment). If different security elements have causal connections with one another (such as poverty and conflict), human security, which covers both, does not, as a concept, prevent analysis on the relationship between the two. Human security does not make the sentence "poverty causes conflict" a tautology, just as the concept "universe" has so far not prevented us from studying relationships between various, analytically separate elements of the universe.

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